



I've put out a fair number of newsletters and FlashPoint articles now, talking about Lean Six Sigma and how it works. However, I wanted to take a step back and explain why we are implementing Lean Six Sigma and how it might impact you.

Lean Six Sigma began at IHDIV almost two years ago. Slightly before then, Lean Six Sigma came to the attention of VADM Phillip Balisle, Commander of NAVSEA. Lean Six Sigma has been successfully deployed at the shipyards and NSWC-Crane. After viewing its success at these installations, VADM Balisle grasped this as an opportunity for NAVSEA to perform business differently. His approach involved performing continuous improvement and regularly returning savings to support the warfighter. To effect this change, he began a five-phase transformation of NAVSEA, and he chose Lean Six Sigma as the vehicle of that change (see Figure 1).

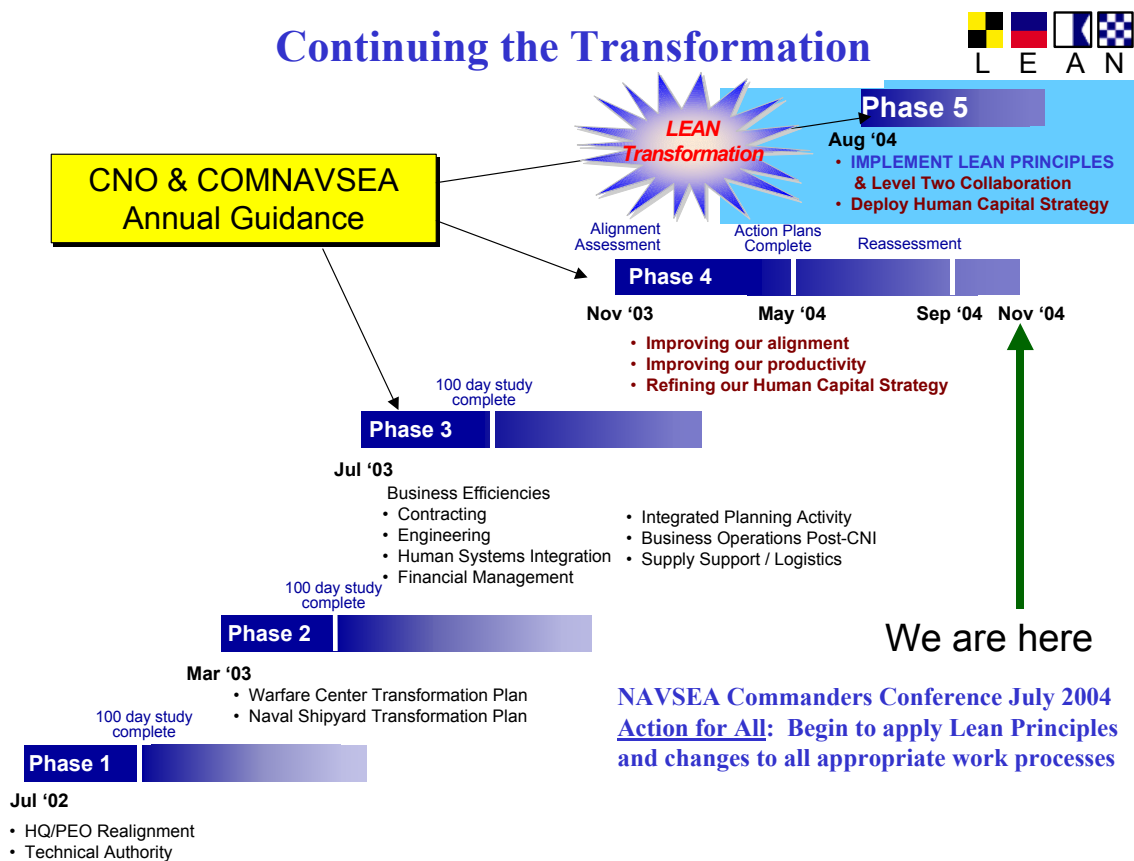


Figure 1: The Five-Phase Transformation of NAVSEA

As part of that transformation, VADM Balisle realized that, at the NAVSEA level, we needed to standardize deployment across the Warfare Centers and Shipyards, and integrate this into the structures of all activities under NAVSEA. To accomplish this, VADM Balisle chartered Task Force Lean (TFL), which was composed of representatives from NSWC, NUWC, and the Shipyards. That wasn't the only change, though. Other goals for this transformation included:

1. Establishment of Lean Targets for FY05 and FY06 – IHDIV's target totals approximately \$12M total for those two years

2. Holding COs accountable for making Lean a success at activities
3. Having a certain percentage of personnel at every activity trained (whether basically trained, Green Belt-trained, or Black Belt-trained) within the next three years
4. Involving everyone at an activity in at least one Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) Team in the next three years.

Sounds like a lot, doesn't it? Maybe, but at least we've already been planning for and performing Lean Six Sigma events. Not every activity has been as proactive as IHDIV.

What's all this mean to you, as an IHDIV employee? Does this mean you can expect to be tapped as a Black Belt or Green Belt? No, it doesn't – but you can expect to be trained in at least the basics of Lean Six Sigma. This training can take the form of attending one of Mo Ibrahim's Lean Six Sigma presentations in the auditorium or the Lean Overview Continuous Learning Course that are periodically offered. It means you can count on actively participating on at least one RIE Team sometime during the next three years. It also means that, as a Subject Matter Expert (or SME), you could be called in as a member of other teams. However, it also means you're in the driver's seat... maybe more than you have been before. If you're familiar with a process and can think of ways it could be improved, it becomes your responsibility to bring it to your supervisor's attention. You can even submit your idea yourself as a potential improvement project (which you can do by clicking on the link at the bottom of the newsletter and going to the "Templates" section on the Lean-Quality Department's Intranet site). The important thing is that you bring it to someone's attention, because the success of Lean Six Sigma at IHDIV rests on your shoulders as much as it does those of any Black Belt or management. Yes, people could be effected by Leaning of a process – but VADM Balisle has pledged that, to the best of their ability, no one will lose their paycheck due to Lean.

I've heard people saying how Lean Six Sigma is just another TQL... or TQM... or quality circles. Just another flavor of the month. Not really, though. Lean Six Sigma's tools have been around for several years and utilized by previous process improvement efforts. Essentially, what's happened is an evolution of process improvement methodologies. And, regardless of previous methodologies, Lean Six Sigma is something we can't afford to ignore. At the TFL conference on October 19-20, I heard Pete Brown, the Executive Director of NAVSEA, say that our efforts were important because it was an opportunity to take a piece of the future and hold it in our own hands. We have the opportunity now to take the future into our hands and make improvements where we want. The consequences of not acting, of not implementing Lean Six Sigma, are taking cuts with little or no control over them. Given the options, I don't know about you, but I like the idea of taking the future in my hands.

Questions or Comments? Contact Tracy Widner x4575.

Don't forget - visit the Lean-Quality Dept. site at <http://ihmdnce/LeanQuality/> and nominate a project for Lean Six Sigma, read the Implementation Plan, or peruse past newsletters and FlashPoint articles!